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ABSTRACT

Audio-teleconferencing is a teaching method that can be economically and effectively implemented into public relations education. The University of Southwestern Louisiana, for example, is experiencing a budget crunch and will not increase the number of full-time public relations faculty in the near future, although the number of students concentrating in public relations is at an all-time high. A project there successfully integrated audio-teleconferencing methodology into two public relations graduate courses, in which students utilized a speaker telephone to interview 17 leading scholars and practitioners of public relations. Each of the experts was researched in advance by the students and topical material was well prepared before the interview. Each telephone interview lasted approximately 45 minutes, followed by 15 minutes of class discussion, which left time for other activities in the class. The entire class session often centered on one topic because the purpose of the project was to enhance course content with interviews. In a graduate student developed questionnaire the students were asked to rate their classroom experience with the use of audio-teleconferencing as a teaching method. Student responses indicated high approval of the methodology. In addition, open-ended questions provided descriptive feedback that will help improve use of this methodology. (Four tables of information and data are included; 23 references and letters to the experts are attached.) (NKA)

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AUDIO-TELECONFERENCING WITH NATIONAL EXPERTS: ENHANCING EDUCATIONAL QUALITY IN AN ERA OF NO-GROWTH BUDGETS

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Paper (Second Place Honors) presented to "Teaching Public Relations," the Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication 1993 Convention, Kansas City, MO, August 11-14, 1993.

AUDIO-TELECONFERENCING WITH NATIONAL EXPERTS: ENHANCING EDUCATIONAL QUALITY IN AN ERA OF NO-GROWTH BUDGETS

ABSTRACT

This paper explores audio-teleconferencing as a teaching method that can be economically and effectively implemented into public relations education. It discusses, in detail, a project that successfully integrated audio-teleconferencing methodology into two public relations graduate courses, in which students utilized a speaker telephone to interview 17 leading scholars and practitioners of public relations. The project was evaluated and received high approval by students.

AUDIO-TELECONFERENCING WITH NATIONAL EXPERTS: ENHANCING EDUCATIONAL QUALITY IN AN ERA OF NO-GROWTH BUDGETS

"Teleconferencing is neither difficult nor expensive, and the possibilities are limited only by the imaginations of the educators involved."
- Hatcher (1983)

In an era when university budgets have no-growth limitations and knowledge is changing faster than educational materials can go to print, it becomes increasingly more of a challenge to present students with quality classroom instruction. A perennial problem in offering effective instruction is the limited breadth of knowledge one professor can bring to an academic field. Past university solutions for bridging the significant gap that exists between recent advances in a field and the time it takes to bring those advances into the classroom were to underwrite the appearances of guest speakers and employ greater numbers of diversified faculty. Many universities can no longer afford these solutions.

Secondly, as we all know, the period between the time that a textbook is written and the time it actually is available for purchase is long. Public relations material can be and often is outdated before faculty and students have the opportunity to read it. Purchasing new materials and equipment that will soon be outdated was less desirable in the age of growing budgets and is often impossible with no-growth budgets. But

public relations educators must still grapple with information-gap problems in their classrooms. This paper will discuss one solution known as audio-teleconferencing that was not only economically feasible, but also extremely successful as a teaching methodology for two graduate public relations courses at the University of Southwestern Louisiana.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS TEACHING

Universities are searching for ways to increase educational impact with decreased funding. While many universities are focusing on no-growth, or even deficits in their budgets, communication departments are experiencing an increased number of enrolled students. In their annual census of enrollment and graduation, Kosicki and Becker (1992), found that the 414 journalism and mass communication programs in the study enrolled a total of 151,740 students in 1991. This represented an increase of 2.5 percent over the year before. An estimated 12.4 percent of the enrolled students specialized in public relations. Given the general financial climate for higher education, it is likely that many of the programs were faced with educating more students with the same or fewer faculty than in previous years. According to DeFleur's working paper on the *Forthcoming Shortage of Communication Ph.D.'s* (1993), in 1975 there were approximately 12,672 bachelor degrees awarded with a

ratio of Ph.D.'s per 1,000 bachelor's degrees at 2.92. In 1989, 22,390 bachelor's degrees awarded with a ratio of Ph.D.'s per 1,000 bachelors degrees at 2.86. The trend for journalism and mass communication is for more bachelor degrees to be awarded with fewer Ph.D. faculty.

Turning to the sub-field of public relations, 12.4 percent of the students enrolled in journalism and mass communication programs in 1991, specialized in public relations (Kosicki & Becker, 1992). This also represented an increase over the year before. Yet in her study of departments and schools affiliated with the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication (ASJMC), that had a declared public relations sequence, Kelly (1992) found that the majority of public relations programs had two or fewer full-time faculty. The overall impact equates to less money, same or fewer faculty, and more students.

Our university, University of Southwestern Louisiana (USL), has not been exempt from decreased funding trends. This institution, the second largest university in the state, recently received notice that the budget for higher education will be cut by 4 percent for the 1993-94 fiscal year over the cuts already in place from the previous year. This announcement resulted in an immediate freeze and evaluation of all university budgets (Hasten, 1993). As a result, the university's full-time public relations

faculty will not increase in the near future, although the number of students concentrating in public relations is at an all-time high. Also, faculty who have traditionally relied on participation in national conferences for exposure to the cutting edge of new knowledge will now have to find ways to fund this travel personally, or to forego such efforts.

It is generally agreed that public relations is a relatively new academic field with limited publication outlets. Public relations classes currently rely heavily on textbooks--many of which are outdated-- with sporadic exposure to practitioners in the field. In the September 1992 issue of the *Public Relations Journal*, editor Susan L. Bovet stated, "Academics need to tap the expertise of 'real world' professionals to assure that course offerings meet the needs of the marketplace" (p. 15). But how do limited numbers of faculty with limited funds bring the "real world" to the public relations classroom?

RELATED LITERATURE

Public relations educators trying to inexpensively bridge the gap in information and between access to information and budget should consider an educational alternative that other disciplines have found effective. The teaching methodology is audio-teleconferencing, which allows students in a classroom to conduct two-way conversations through the

telephone system with a distant scholar or practitioner.

Similar to public relations, other disciplines also experience faculty and funding shortages. Some instructors from other disciplines have turned to audio-teleconferencing to bridge the information gap. For example, Passer (1984) described experiences in polymer science similar to those in public relations. Admitting that any one faculty unit at any one university cannot possibly keep up with the quick and constant change in the chemistry field, he called this inability "comparable voids." He identified audio-teleconferencing as an inexpensive way to fill these voids in knowledge. He also described three advantages of this teaching method:

(1) the speaker gets to lecture from home- no travel is necessary;

(2) the lack of travel reduces costs tremendously; and

(3) intermittent scheduling is possible- a speaker may let his or her discussion linger over a longer period of days, but with shorter scheduled hours.

Passer (1984) described his use of the combination of audio-teleconferencing and auxiliary print materials as "working well."

Audio-teleconferencing is not just useful in a university environment. Hatcher (1983) lauded the successes of audio-

teleconferencing when used at high school and primary grade levels. He stated, "There is no better way to encourage students to excel in a subject area than to have them talk with someone who is successful in that field," (p. 16). He also described three types of conferences: informational, author interviews, and professional enrichment. Informational conferences enhance and supplement the curriculum, reinforcing the material the students study. Author interviews encourage students to read a novel or published work and study the bibliographic information about the author. Professional enrichment is used to assist teachers and administrators, replacing --to some degree-- expensive out-service training.

Hatcher (1983) also asserted that the impact of audio-teleconferences was more extensive than first assumed. "Teleconferences not only encourage reading, but help improve listening skills," (p. 17). He argued that today young people are increasingly dependent on visual reinforcement and are not developing their cognitive skills sufficiently. With audio-teleconferencing, he claimed, students are encouraged to get actively involved instead of being complacent, passive participants. It is likely that university students are also visually dependent when interpreting information.

Hatcher (1984) summed up his overall success with audio-teleconferencing, stating, "The potential for this type of program is unlimited. Knowledgeable people are anxious to participate, and the technology is available (p 17)."

Wilson, Litle and Wilson (1986) used audio-teleconferencing to teach a North Carolina, 11th and 12th grade history class, which featured talks with biographer-historians. Reporting their experience, the authors stated, "The ideas shared in these audio-teleconferences may be found elsewhere in printed form, but in actual conversation with the person who wrote them, they take on new life and are more likely to generate further thought on the part of the students" (p. 91).

Another example of audio-teleconferencing with high school participants was described in Jene Galvin's (1989) article, *Using Audio-Teleconferencing to Teach Global Awareness*. Galvin described a phenomenon discovered while researching audio-teleconferencing, stating, "Althcugh a number of additional articles have been published recently about satellite teleconferencing, few articles describe audio only teleconferencing," (p. 236).

Galvin (1985) also recognized in an earlier article that audio-teleconferencing was not a replacement for actual interaction. Even

though audio-teleconferencing is a valuable alternative teaching method, he said, "teaching over the telephone cannot be as valuable as teaching in the same room with the students".

Galvin (1989) described the keys to conducting a teleconference successfully. He believed it hinges upon the amount of planning and follow-up that the educator initiates. The educator will need to send letters of request, confirmation, and thanks to the participants who will be interviewed. He also stated, "The actual phone conversations, as interesting and informative as they may be, serve as motivation for the class to investigate other sources" (p. 248). According to Galvin, the students need to prepare more than they previously have experienced. Preparation includes, outside reading and investigation into the background of the problem in order to develop questions for the interview. He argued that the selection of questions is the crucial element for the successful teleconference.

As just described, most of the literature related to teaching with audio-teleconferencing was found in the academic area of education, specifically in journals on instruction and curriculum at the primary and secondary levels. No information was found that this methodology has been used in journalism and mass communication programs at colleges and

universities. Focusing specifically on public relations, however, one example was found that provides a precedent for incorporating audio-teleconferencing into public relations education.

In the introductory issue of *Teaching Public Relations,* Bill Baxter (1988), associate professor at Marquette University, described two different formats of audio-teleconferencing with which he had experimented. The first, and least expensive, consisted of students recording 30 minutes of questions and comments directed at the author of their textbook and then sending the audio cassette by mail to the author, who then recorded his responses and mailed the tape back to the class within one week. The second format also involved a public relations textbook author, but it used an amplified telephone hookup and a Wats line to create a dialog with students that allowed for spontaneous interaction. Although more expensive, Baxter (1988) declared the telephone format "more effective" and suggested that taping the conversations for later use in other classes could help justify the extra expense– a suggestion that was followed in the audio-teleconference project that is described shortly.

Baxter (1988) concluded that there were numerous benefits generated by this teaching methodology. Besides gaining insights,

explanations and relations, "Students," he said, "are stimulated by the notion that resources from beyond the local area, and even across the nation, are available to them" (p.1). Furthermore, Baxter alluded to a two-way symmetrical dimension of audio-teleconferencing when he stated, "Students sometimes propose additions, changes or deletions to the textbook, which suggests that the dialog can be as profitable for the participating author as it is for the students" (p.1).

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AUDIO-TELECONFERENCING PROJECT

Based on the literature reviewed and the barriers described earlier, a project was designed to incorporate audio-teleconferencing into the public relations master's program at the University of Southwestern Louisiana during the 1992-93 academic year. The two graduate courses selected for this teaching methodology were: *Contemporary Issues in Public Relations,* offered during the Fall 1992 Semester, and *Public Relations Management,*
offered in the spring. Titled, "Meet the Experts Series," the project's overall goal was to offer graduate students enrolled in those courses access to the cutting edge of knowledge in their field through the efficient use of technology. The objectives for the project, as stated in a

September 15, 1992 grant proposal seeking institutional funding, were:

- To increase instructional effectiveness during 1992-1993 in graduate courses that are dependent on the latest information in public relations theory and practice;
- To establish a sense of national community between graduate students who primarily are from the South and national leaders in public relations;
- To create a series of audio tapes of first-hand commentary on current issues and advances in public relations that will be made available to all [university] students; and
- To encourage use of telecommunications as a teaching method for graduate education in communication and other disciplines.

Based on the overall goal of the project (i.e., access to the cutting edge of knowledge in the field), the primary textbook assigned for both courses was *Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* (J. Grunig, 1992). No secondary text was assigned for the Contemporary Issues course in the fall, but Hendrix's (1992) case study book was assigned for the Public Relations Management course to provide a content framework of the seven functions or specializations of public relations, as defined by the Body of Knowledge Task Force of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSSA) Research Committee (1988): media, community, internal, government, investor, consumer and donor relations.

The *Excellence* book (J. Grunig, 1992) served as a theoretical

foundation for both courses, anchoring them in recent developments in public relations theory. Building on that foundation, the Contemporary Issues course stressed issues and progress in theory, with some consideration to current issues in public relations practice. This emphasis guided the selection of the first semester's participants in the "Meet the Experts" project.

As shown in Table 1, USL graduate students enrolled in Contemporary Issues during the Fall Semester were personally introduced to some of public relations' most active and productive teacher-scholars for dialogues on topics at the forefront of research.

[Place Table 1 About Here]

For example, James Grunig of the University of Maryland and editor of the students' textbook led off the expert series with an audio-teleconference interview on his theories. USL's students learned of the new ideas about the four models of public relations and recent findings of the seminal research project headed by Grunig and sponsored by the International Association of Business Communicators. David Dozier discussed public relations roles with the students, who had prepared questions based on his work, including his chapter in the Excellence book (Dozier 1992). Debra Miller enlightened the students on multiculturalism

issues, and Elizabeth Toth answered questions about gender issues– both addressing their most recent thinking on the topics as given in papers presented at the 1992 Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Convention in Montreal, just three months before the audio-teleconferencing interviews.

In all, eight experts participated in the first half of the project. As shown in Table 1, six of the eight were academics; two were leading practitioners, including the then-president-elect of PRSA, Hal Warner, who focused his interview on the future of public relations' leading professional society as outlined in its just-approved, long range planning document, *Blueprint 2000* (PRSA, 1992).

Project

As pointed out by the literature, the culmination of bringing together these experts and the graduate students at USL was dependent on a well-planned process. The instructor of both classes drew from personal affiliations and participation in national conferences to identify potential interview subjects. Letters requesting participation were sent from the instructor to the selected experts asking for telephone interviews focused on a specific topic with suggestions for related publications and papers (see Appendix A). The letters were followed up

within 10 days by a personal phone call from the instructor (during daytime hours) to answer any questions, confirm topics, and adjust scheduling. As opposed to the higher prime-time long-distance rates, the interviews, themselves, had the advantage of after 6 p.m. rates because both graduate classes were scheduled in the evening from 6 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

A confirmation letter about the interview was sent to each expert-subject who agreed to participate (see Appendix B). It should be noted here that the rate of agreement for the entire year was extremely high: 94 percent, with only 1 out of 18 individuals declining due to a teaching conflict. In the confirmation letters, subjects were asked to send one copy of their latest work, if relevant to the topic, which was then duplicated and assigned, along with other related materials to be read in advance of the interview. A finalized schedule for each semester's course was disseminated to the students with the help of a graduate assistant assigned to coordinate duplication and distribution of material as it arrived from the interview subjects.

From the readings, each student prepared--in writing-- three or more questions per interview. These questions were graded by the instructor based on comprehension of the assigned material, as well as

creativity and relevancy. Directed by the topic they had chosen for their individual research papers– which accounted for 45 percent of the total course grade-- each student volunteered to be the "leader" for one interview. The interview leader was responsible for covering the expert's topic in-depth, which supported his or her literature review for the research paper, and was responsible for selecting the best questions submitted by his or her colleagues and for structuring the actual interview for the most effective use of time.

Each of the telephone interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes, followed by 15 minutes of class discussion; thus, the eight to nine hours of class time spent in each course on the interviews represented less than 25 percent of the approximately 45 class hours available. This left sufficient time for lectures, class discussions, and case analyses on other course material. However, often the entire class session centered on one topic because the purpose of the audio-teleconferencing project was to enhance course content with expert interviews (e.g., public relations ethics).

Two thank-you letters were sent following the interviews, one from the instructor and one from the student interview leader on behalf of the class (see Appendix C). Letters, as the basic correspondence of

organizational communication, were evaluated by the instructor and calculated in total course grade. Feedback from the interview subjects indicated that student letters were a necessary element in the two-way communication process and provided important reaction for the subjects' evaluation of the methodology.

Unlike the research-focused course offered in the fall, the Public Relations Management course in the spring sought to create a dialog with leading practitioners who applied theory to practice. As mentioned earlier, the primary textbook (J. Grunig, 1992) provided a theoretical foundation for this course, whereas Hendrix (1992) provided the case studies framework for the specializations, or publics with which public relations has traditionally been concerned. As shown in Table 2, a series composed of eight practitioners and one academic was opened with Dr. Scott Cutlip.

[Place Table 2 About Here]

Some of the leading practitioners in public relations, including four past presidents of PRSA, were participants in this second half of the audio-teleconferencing project. Students' participation in the project were very similar to the fall semester's experience. One graduate student interviewer volunteered to be leader for a particular audio-teleconference

interview based on the individual research interest of that student. Questions were again developed before the interview and the student leader was responsible for directing and choosing a logical order for the questions. Each expert subject was sent a thank-you letter from both the instructor and the student interview leader. The actual process was similar, but the focus of learning changed.

Unlike the fall course, these students were assigned to read case studies from the Hendrix (1992) text along with the Excellence book (J. Grunig, 1992). Practitioners had a wealth of published, how-to-literature and proprietary documents on managing public relations to share with students. For example, Kathleen Lewton, author of *Public Relations in Health Care: A Guide for Professionals* discussed public relations for health care organizations.

Also, valuable internal managerial tools were shared with students. Cathy Ahles, vice president Macomb Community College, shared her institutions position paper on the future of higher education, specifically community colleges in the 1990s. Jerry Bryan sent a copy of the communications plan on restructuring his corporation. Fred Garcia an expert on investor relations, shared an internal memorandum on when to release bad news to his firm's clients.

Perhaps most indicative of the timeliness brought to this course by audio-teleconferencing was the interview with Sunshine Overcamp, senior vice president of the United Way of America. For preparation for that interview, students read relevant literature in addition to news clippings on the United Way crisis and new public relations plan developed by her to restore confidence and rebuild trust in the aftermath of the crisis.

Project Funding

Moving away from the interviews themselves, students enrolled in the fall semester course were provided experience in grant proposal writing. Under an instructional mini-grant program, sponsored by USL, students in the Contemporary Issues class were divided into three teams and assigned to research and write a draft grant proposal that was evaluated for grades and then collapsed and enhanced by the instructor for submission. The resulting grant proposal was approved, and the year-long project was funded for $485. It should be pointed out here that before funding was provided, the instructor utilized her personally owned speaker phone and assumed costs of the long distance telephone calls; her department assumed duplicating costs.

A similar audio-teleconferencing project--one based on four interviews for two semesters-- would cost a total of $361.00.

[Place Table 3 About Here]

Table 3 provides a sample budget for an eight speaker project. It should be noted in table 3 that the first semester initial costs are much higher because of purchasing of the telephone equipment. In USL's case, equipment purchase was a two-line Easa-phone with recorder with 17 mini-cassette tapes.

Evaluation

When available, university-wide evaluations by the students enrolled in each of the two courses during 1992-93 will be compared to those of students enrolled in the same courses in 1991-92. In the meantime, a questionnaire, consisting primarily of Likert-like questions was developed and administered to the graduate students involved (see Appendix D). The questionnaire asked the students to rate their experience in the classroom with the use of audio-teleconferencing as a teaching method. It also included open-ended questions asking what the students liked most and least about the audio-teleconferencing.

Students responses indicated high approval of the audio-teleconferencing methodology. On a 7-point scale, the mean scores were all above 6. The open-ended questions provided descriptive feedback that will help improve use of this methodology.

[Place Table 4 About Here]

For example, evaluations from the first group of students contained comments about the lack of visual reinforcement. The comments resulted in requesting photographs from the speakers participating in the second semester series to help students visualize to whom they were talking. Comments from the second group included suggestions on how to utilize the interview time more efficiently.

Discussion and Conclusion

Just as Hatcher (1983) suggested our project has only been limited by the imagination of the instructor. Even in a time of no-growth budgets, it was possible to incorporate up-to-date knowledge and two-way interaction with top scholars and practitioners into two public relations graduate courses. Audio-teleconferencing was the best methodological approach for instructional success in these two courses. But USL's process should be altered to fit other courses individual needs.

Some additional options could be possible, but have not been tried in the public relations classroom. For example, the interview schedule could incorporate international calls to international practitioners and scholars for about $36.00 for 45 minutes (per AT&T quote for evening rates).

Conference panels could be incorporated to bring several scholars to the classroom to discuss issues with the class and each other. It is even probable the price for video phones continue to fall (Schneidawind 1993), that the public relations educator could purchase two such video phones (AT&T quote $999.99) and mail one in advance to each interview expert, who would then ship it back.

Audio-teleconferencing is not for every educator or for all public relations classes. One obvious reason is that if all educators were using this method, there would be overlap and impossible demands made on scholar and practitioner time. It is more feasible for each program to use its state chapter of organizations like PRSA to identify speakers. A second suggestion is to interview only one or two subjects per semester. And, of course, not all courses are compatible with this methodology, rather it should be used only for those courses whose content it would compliment.

Universities are searching for ways to increase educational effectiveness with decreased or no-growth funding. Public relations educators and senior practitioners have the expertise to enhance the quality of teaching with limited funds. Seminars utilizing audio-teleconferencing can put the student in touch with some of the foremost

experts in their field. Speaking directly with such experts challenges the students and enriches their educational experience.

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TABLE 1
NATIONAL EXPERTS INTERVIEWED
1992 FALL SEMESTER
CMCN 540–CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

EXPERT	SUBJECT	DATE
Dr. James Grunig Professor, College of Journalism, University of Maryland, College Park	Public Relations Theory	September 10
Dr. David Dozier Professor, Department of Journalism, San Diego State University, CA	Public Relations Roles Theory	September 24
Mr. Harland Warner, APR Vice President, Manning, Selvage & Lee Washington, D. C.	PR Education and Professionalism	October 1
Prof. Debra A. Miller, APR Associate Dean, School of Journalism & Mass Communication, Florida International University North Miami	Multiculturalism	October 8
Dr. Dean Kruckeberg, APR Professor, Department of Communication Studies University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls	Public Relations Ethics	October 15
Dr. Elizabeth Toth, APR Associate Professor, S. I. Newhouse School of Public Communication, Syracuse University, NY	Gender Issues in Public Relations	October 22
Dr. John Pavlik, Associate Director, Research and Technology Studies, Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, New York, NY	Public Relations Technology	November 12
Mr. Patrick Jackson, Fellow, PRSA, Editor, *PR Reporter*, Exeter, NH	Behaviorial Objectives for PR & Importance of Employee Communication Programs	November 19

TABLE 2
NATIONAL EXPERTS INTERVIEWED
1993 SPRING SEMESTER
CMCN 546--PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT

EXPERT	SUBJECT	DATE
Dr. Scott M. Cutlip, Dean Emeritus Grad, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Georgia, Athens	Public Relations as a Management Function	February 2
Mr. John Bertak, APR, Director of News & Information, U.S. Depaartment of Education Washington, D.C.	Media Relations & Public Relations in Government	February 9
Ms. Catherine Ahles, APR, Vice President, College Relations Macomb Community College Warren, MI	Community Relations & Higher Education Public Relations	March 2
Mr. John Paluszek, APR, President, Ketchum Public Affairs, New York, NY	Public Affairs/Government Relations Agency Public Relations	March 9
Mr. Helio Fred Garcia, APR Managing Director, Clark & Weinstock Inc., New York, NY	Investor/Financial Relations	March 16
Mr. Jerry L. Bryan, Fellow, PRSA Director, Corporate Communications Sverdrup Corporation Maryland Heights, MO	Consumer Relations & Corporate Public Relations	March 23
Ms. Kathleen L. Lewton, APR, Sr. Vice President, Marketing & Public Relations, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center New York, NY	Internal/Employee Relations & Health Care Public Relations	March 30
Mr. John W. Felton, Fellow, PRSA, Vice President Corporate Communications McCormick & Company, Inc. Sparks, MD	Relations with Special Publics & International Public Relations	April 6
Ms. Sunshine Overkamp, APR Senior Vice President, United Way of America, Alexandria, VA	Emergency Public Relations & Public Relations for Charitable Organizations	April 13

TABLE 3

SAMPLE BUDGET*

Equipment	Estimated Costs
Panasonic 2-line Easa-phone with recorder	$195.00
Sony MC-60 Tapes (4)	6.00
Office Supplies	
Departmental Letterhead	4.00
Postage	3.00
Duplication Fees	
Copies for Students of Experts Recent Work	25.00
Copies for Students of Biography of the Expert	5.00
Phone Charges	
4 Confirmation Calls (daytime rates)	8.00
4 Evening Calls (45 minutes each call)	32.00
FIRST SEMESTER (START-UP) TOTAL:	$278.00
SECOND AND FUTURE SEMESTERS TOTAL:	$83.00**

* Budget is based on four speakers for one semester.
** Estimated per semester costs minus the Easa-phone.

TABLE 4

STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF GRADUATE COURSES USING AUDIO-TELECONFERENCING

QUESTIONS	MEAN*	COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS
Compared to other graduate courses that you have taken, how would you rate this course?	6.727	"The instant feedback from authors enhanced our discussions."
Compared to all other college courses you have taken, how would you rate this course?	6.409	"Teleconferencing is a wonderful opportunity for students to ask leading practitioners questions that are not always addressed in the textbooks."
The phone conversations with experts have helped increase my knowledge of public relations.	6.545	"I felt more in touch with the authors"
I would like to see more courses in my graduate curriculum that use audio-teleconferencing as a teaching method.	6.136	"It opened my eyes to the academic side of public relations."
		"The interaction made us all more confident about what we know."

(N=22)

* Responses were measured on a 7-point Likert-like scale.

APPENDIX A

The University of Southwestern Louisiana
Lafayette, Louisiana 70504-3650

College of Arts, Humanities, and Behavioral Sciences

Université des Acadiens

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
P. O. BOX 43650
TEL. (318) 231-6103
FAX (318) 231-6104

January 23, 1993

Mr. John L. Paluszek, APR
President
Ketchum Public Affairs
1133 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10036-6710

Dear John:

You may recall our brief conversation at the PRSA National Conference last October about my intention to ask you to be interviewed by telephone this spring as part of a "Meet the Experts" series for my graduate seminar on *Public Relations Management*. This is the formal letter of request, and I hope your busy schedule will allow you to participate.

The purpose of this series is to bring together, by long-distance phone calls, the 11 graduate students enrolled in this course and 10 senior practitioners from around the country who are on the cutting edge of management issues in public relations. Scott Cutlip will kick off the series on February 2, and practitioners such as Jack Felton and Cathy Ahles have already agreed to participate. The class meets this semester on Tuesday evenings, from 6 to 8:50 p.m. Central Standard Time. Based on the course syllabus, I have scheduled your interview for Tuesday, March 9, at 7:15 p.m. <u>your time</u>. The interview will last 45 minutes and can be conducted from your home.

The two subjects on which I would like you to focus are 1) Public Affairs/Government Relations Programs and 2) Agency Public Relations. Students will have read assigned literature and formulated questions for you in advance of the interview. I have assigned the Silver Anvil-winning case developed by Ketchum Public Relations and the Road Information Program that appears in Hendrix's 1992 book. I would appreciate any suggestions you may have on available literature related to the topics, particularly your own work.

One student will act as the interview leader, starting and guiding the session. Each of the 11 students, in turn, will introduce him- or herself to you by first name and then ask one question. At the end of the session, you will be asked to expand or comment on any topic of your choice.

We plan to record the interview, unless you have any objection. Under a $485 grant I received for this teaching project, we were able to buy a speaker telephone with recording capability so that communication students other than those enrolled in this seminar can benefit from your wealth of knowledge and experience.

I will give you a call in the next week to find out if you can accommodate this request and to answer any questions you may have. I appreciate your consideration, and I hope things are going well with you.

Cordially,

Kathleen S. Kelly, Ph.D., APR
Associate Professor

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Université des Acadiens

February 10, 1993

Ms. Kathleen Larey Lewton, Fellow, PRSA
Sr. Vice President, Marketing & Public Relations
Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center
AP-14
New York, NY 10032-3784

Dear Kathy:

Thank you so much for agreeing to be interviewed by telephone by my graduate students on Tuesday, March 30, at 6:15 p.m. Chicago time. It is my understanding that we will be calling your office for the interview—on your second day at a new job! (Congratulations, by the way; from recent experience I know the new position and location will be rejuvenating even though the changes may seem a little daunting right now.) In case of any last-minute change, my office number is (318) 231-6953, or I can be reached before 1:30 p.m. that day at (318) 332-4141.

As you know, the topics on which I would like you to focus are *1) Internal Communications Programs and 2) Health Care Public Relations.*

In preparation for the interview, the students will have read two chapters in your 1991 book: chapter one and the chapter on employee relations. One student, who plans to use the literature on internal public relations and health care PR for the research paper required for this course, will serve as the "interview leader." She will have read more extensively on the topics.

As mentioned in my letter to you of January 23, we plan to record this interview for future use by public relations students.

I am very excited about this "audio-teleconferencing methodology," thanks to leading experts such as you who have agreed to participate. Enclosed for your information is a complete listing of those who will be interviewed for this semester's seminar on Public Relations Management.

We look forward to talking with you on March 30.

Cordially,

Kathleen S. Kelly, Ph.D., APR
Associate Professor

APPENDIX C

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Lafayette, Louisiana 70504-3650

College of Arts, Humanities, and Behavioral Sciences

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September 26, 1992

Dr. David M. Dozier
Professor
Department of Journalism
San Diego State University
San Diego, CA 92182

Dear David:

Thank you, so much for participating in our "Meet the Experts" series with the wonderful interview you gave last Thursday to my graduate students in *Contemporary Issues in Public Relations.*

The simple act of talking to you helped make your ideas and theories come alive for these young people. And they were so impressed with your cordial and youthful approach (students tend to believe that all PR literature is written by 75-year old gurus who ponder deep thoughts on lonely mountaintops)!

Following the interview, we spent one hour discussing role theory and chapter 12 in the IABC book, and I really could see a difference from past semesters in the students' ability to link theoretical concepts with real-world situations. The discussion was lively, stimulating, and more informed because of your "presence" in our classroom. Joe Petrowski will hate me for this, but Erlbaum should produce a video tape with all the IABC authors in a Q&A session with students and practitioners!

Maybe I'll suggest a similar idea for the textbook I'm writing for Erlbaum on fund raising. I think public relations educators would appreciate such a teaching aid, particularly when it offers personal insight on a "new" specialization, such as fund raising, or on milestone theory building, such as the work of the IABC team. Textbooks are paramount in my mind these days because just this past Monday I was notified by the Lilly Endowment that I've been awarded a $35,000 grant to support course release and summer salary this academic year to write my fund-raising text. Now I just have to figure out what I have to say!

Whatever I come up with, I know these teleconferencing interviews with experts, such as you, will help keep me—as well as my students—on the cutting edge of public relations theory and practice. Thank you for your valuable contribution.

Cordially,

Kathleen S. Kelly, Ph.D., APR
Associate Professor

Communication 540 & 546 Evaluation

APPENDIX D

You have now completed a semester of audio-teleconferencing with national experts. We would like you to answer the following questions concerning your experience in the Communication 540 & 546 courses. Please answer all questions.

1. Compared to other graduate courses in communication that you have taken at USL, how would you rate this course?

   much more valuable 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 much less valuable

2. Compared to all other college courses you have taken, how would you rate this course?

   much more valuable 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 much less valuable

3. The phone conversations with experts have helped increase my knowledge of public relations.

   strongly agree 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 strongly disagree

4. I would like to see more courses in my graduate curriculum that use audio-teleconferencing as a teaching method.

   strongly agree 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 strongly disagree

5. Please describe the things you liked *most* about audio-teleconferencing with the experts.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. Please describe the things you liked *least* about audio-teleconferencing.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. If you have any additional comments, please write them on the back of this page.

A few questions about you.

Cumulative GPA ____ **(include this semester)** Number of Graduate Hours completed ____

Gender _____ Age _____

State where undergraduate degree was earned _____